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William McKee, CBE
Chairman
Outer London Commission
City Hall
London

Dear Will,

Outer London Commission Consultation

Thank you for coming to the meeting of the Invest Bexley Board on 5 May 2009. It was good to have the opportunity to have a discussion on a number of issues that are important to this Borough and to take note of your presentation explaining the role of the Outer London Commission and related opportunities for Bexley.

Following this, I am writing to set out Bexley's position and response to the initial questions of the Outer London Commission. Together with our key partners in the Strategic Partnership for Bexley, we certainly welcome the establishment of your Commission and will work with you to ensure our needs are properly understood and the best outcome secured.

Ongoing dialogue is critical and so please regard what follows as a clear statement of our perspective but also as part of an iterative process. Our detailed responses to the initial questions circulated by the Commission are attached as an appendix. I summarise below key points from our response and other pertinent issues of concern.

Helping the economic growth of Outer London boroughs

Accessibility and importance of a multi-centre approach

Bexley is not easily accessible to any of the super hubs suggested by the Commission and this would be essential for potential growth to be realised. We strongly believe that a multi-centre approach to bolster the economy of Outer London sits well with the Commission's terms of reference. We disagree with the overemphasis of the past on the central London economy being the sole driving force. In Bexley's view, in addition to the limited number of super hubs, it would be essential for the Commission to identify the 'major' and 'secondary' growth hubs and their full potential and constraints, including competition from out-of-London sub-regional shopping centres. As the Mayor's 'Way to Go' document has correctly recognised, it is important to deviate from the agglomeration concept of the past to a polycentric approach, fostering balanced economic growth and reducing the need to travel. This is also reflected in the Mayor's stated intention to 'help people to live and work in the same area rather than being propelled to distant centres.

Bexley would welcome the Commission's support in realising the full potential of Bexleyheath as a major town centre of London as explained in our first submission.

Role of the local economy

The role of local centres in diversifying and strengthening London's economy cannot be overstated. In our experience, it is critically important to increase and diversify the range and types of jobs available in Bexley Thames-side. It would also be necessary to ensure that residents' skill sets are greatly improved. In addition, we must:

- build on individual Borough strengths such as manufacturing and food production sectors;
- invest in upgrading business areas and town centres in terms of physical infrastructure and partnership working with businesses to meet increasing expectations;
- strengthen the base of a 'green economy', by building on both environmental goods and services industries.

We have been very supportive of an approach which safeguards the retail function of our town centres and strictly controls the introduction of other uses. Although this view is under review, there is some concern that an element of control is maintained to ensure that concentrations of a particular kind of use do not undermine the viability and vitality of the town centre. Emerging LDF policy will seek to introduce a more flexible approach to the mix of uses and acknowledge town centre's changing roles and functions, including the option to review the extent of town centre boundaries where change has altered the character of, particularly peripheral, areas. In this context support from the Mayor for this approach is welcome although we would need clarification as to what streamlining arrangements are being considered. The GLA's role should remain strategic in this regard and the detail of the nature of change in local centres should be left to the boroughs to decide.

About 65% of local jobs are occupied by local residents. The provision of local employment improves the sustainability of London by realising the full potential of local centres. The existence of the local economy also helps reduce car travel and encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling.

Improving economic resilience and optimising opportunity

Outer London can contribute to making London's economy more resilient by encouraging a diversity of business activity to complement financial and business services clustering in central London. There is a need to build on locations with particular strengths and opportunities. For example, Bexley is able to build on its manufacturing and food production strengths as well as logistics.

Already Bexley has some 75000 jobs but also a supply of development land that would allow this figure to be significantly increased. Public sector investment is essential to raising the quality of major employment locations such as Belvedere and provide a catalyst for private sector investment. We need to attract more intensive employment activities and better align with the national trend for 'knowledge' jobs. This must be in tandem with support for local people to upgrade skills.

There is a significant co-relation between the availability of adequate educational facilities and the level and diversity of skills of the workforce. Regeneration in Bexley's deprived areas therefore require more local further education and higher education resources. This needs substantial investment in setting up major academic institution in the Borough (as exemplified by Thurrock's new university at Grays) or by expanding existing local provision.

The acknowledged growth market of environmental goods and services is a further opportunity. Locations such as Belvedere have been given the role of dealing with London's waste through major sites operated or to be operated by Thames Water (sewage sludge incineration), RRRL (waste to energy incineration), Grosvenor (waste paper recycling), Mayer (metals recycling etc). There is a need to focus on those activities that add more value in the environmental goods and services market thereby creating a more diverse cluster including research and development.

Provision of high-quality public transport

We are poorly served by public transport choice. As transport and connectivity play a key role in regeneration, any policy recommendations for the economic prospects of Outer London must involve proposals for the enhancement and improvement of public transport infrastructure in boroughs like ours. Bexley needs better north-south links and long-term connection to the London Underground network, feeder services linking employment areas to town centres and transport interchanges and more opportunities for orbital movement. Crossrail is essential and must be extended to Ebbsfleet, DLR extended, underground services extended and transit services across the north of the borough introduced. Outer London require these types of public transport intervention if growth is to be achieved and the objectives of the Commission are to be met.

In particular, we consider it a priority to implement a transit system for Erith and Belvedere (North Bexley Transit). These parts of Bexley have the greatest potential for growth, but suffer from very low public transport accessibility and this has been identified as one of the major barriers to development. Currently, these areas attract logistics and low employment industry but they could sustain major housing and employment uses if a distinctive high quality public transport system could be provided. This would bring major economic, housing and other benefits to the area, raise land values and thereby generate a return on investment. Kent Fastrack already serves the neighbouring area and Crossrail will bring Central London, Docklands and Heathrow within easy reach. It requires a transit network to provide the local links with a service that potential passengers will recognise as reliable and distinctive. It is only with the proposed North Bexley Transit that we can realise the full potential of Abbey Wood's enhanced accessibility by means of Crossrail.

Our efforts to reduce the use of the car are also hampered by the lack of adequate public transport in the Borough. We, therefore, need to recognise the reasonable dependence on the car in such circumstances and its impact on a standard policy of parking restraint in the face of more liberal parking standards in the adjacent Kent districts. The parking policy in a borough like Bexley must balance the need for restraints to secure a sustainable environment with the need to help viable development in town centres. We hope the London Plan will better reflect the nature and need of Outer London with regard to more flexible parking standards.

Other issues

Thames Gateway Bridge

We welcome the Mayor's decision to cancel TfL's flawed Thames Gateway Bridge scheme at Gallions Reach. We strongly opposed the proposal which was duly rejected by the Planning Inspector. We would also oppose any scheme that resulted in large additional vehicle flows along residential streets. We do however recognise that the river is a significant barrier to business and the accessibility of its residents to

employment opportunities. We are therefore keen to work with TfL on the River Crossing Option Study. This review must consider the wider picture and incorporate the findings of the Department for Transport and the Kent and Essex studies for additional capacity to cross the river and for a Lower Thames Crossings. Bexley would also support proposals for new public transport crossings and has advocated additional DLR crossings to Thamesmead.

Simplified Planning Zone

Although cautious about Simplified Planning Zones with their complexity of procedures, we can see that there may be advantages in such an approach in places like Belvedere, but we would want to explore this further with you.

Conclusion:

Outer London needs a network of major town centres that continue to strengthen around established communities. It also needs centres of manufacturing industries and logistic services to diversify London's economy. This must be supported by excellent transport accessibility to enhance local growth and vitality and skills training to ensure the workforce is equipped to benefit from jobs created. By doing this, Outer London contributes to a sustainable environment, minimising impacts of travel and helping growth that makes London an 'economic force to be reckoned with'.

Yours sincerely,



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Councillor Teresa O'Neill
Leader of the Council

Appendix: Detailed Response to OLC's Initial Questions

Economic

Q. 1 Why has Outer London growth in employment lagged behind that of Inner and Central London and that of the South East?

Response:

There are three important reasons:

- Lack of investment in declining industrial areas within outer London
- London Plan policies which encourages growth in CAZ and limit outer London economy to waste, logistics, recycling and service related industries linked to housing growth
- Infrastructure investment which favours inner and central London

Parts of Outer London area, particularly along the banks of the Thames, have been de-industrialised resulting in major job losses which have not been recovered owing to a lack of investment and concentration of resources in other parts of London. At the same time, regional governance has changed to place requirements on regions to deal with their own waste and this has impacted most significantly on those areas, particularly along the Thames, which are on the outer parts of London. This creates a paradoxical situation where the Outer London Boroughs perform low-value functions whilst, within a few hundred metres, those areas in the SE region bordering London prosper with higher value functions owing to being their region's closest location to London.

Town centres have been affected by the decline, resulting in increased unemployment in some areas and reduced consumer expenditure. In other areas such as the commuter belts, there is some evidence that consumer expenditure is around the workplace (as evidenced by the growth of a retail centre at Canary Wharf) and is lessened in the more local centres. Other town centres that have performed relatively well in comparison goods such as Bexleyheath have found it difficult to build an offer beyond lower to mid range shopping. The influence of regional shopping centres just outside London (such as Bluewater) has been a contributing factor. There is a significant danger that the downward spiral of decline in town centres, if not arrested will result in faceless communities without a sense of belonging to a place (or not wanting a sense of belonging to the town!).

Q. 2 What factors have contributed to the uneven performance of economic sectors and geographic areas in Outer London? Why have some economic sectors prospered and others declined? Why have some areas done better and others worse?

Response: These are largely historical, with successive plans seeing the east of London as the most suitable location for low value industry and activity. There has been an over-emphasis on the finance and business services cluster and less attention on diversifying the employment offer. There has been a tendency to allow the de-industrialisation of London whereas other regions have sought to retain their capacities. There is no world city that has allowed its manufacturing offer to decline to the extent it has been invited to do in London. Although London has some

excellent research Universities, the expertise has not been applied to London's manufacturing. Similarly, other areas have renewed through public sector investment in high quality business parks whilst London has primarily relied on the private sector, but this has not happened in lower value locations. This approach is illustrated through the fact that London has made the case for public investment (e.g. as shown in securing Assisted Area status for part of the industrial areas) but the LDA not making available grants for new investment in plant and machinery (a mainstream offer for an Assisted Area) unlike all other regional development agencies with an Assisted Area. The use of areas such as Bexley for waste incineration has created poor perceptions of the area for new higher value investment. Similarly, the lack of good public transport links in some areas (e.g. in Bexley, no underground, tram, and river service, nor any proposed) has resulted in other locations being favoured for office development.

Q. 3 Overall, what are the main barriers to economic and employment growth in Outer London and what factors need to be addressed to allow the region to fulfil its economic potential? In particular, what investments are needed (particularly transport, both private/public, and education/skills and business support) to best ensure employment growth to 2031 either in existing or new sectors?

Response: The marginal investment case for many locations, perceptions and encouraging innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit.

As regards the factors that need to be addressed, please see answer to Q.2 above. Incentives are needed to encourage large scale investment. These include (a) retaining and growing the existing manufacturing base through the provision of high quality business parks, (b) refocusing the larger business areas, (c) providing support for innovation amongst SMEs, (d) encouraging enterprise to make the most of existing infrastructure (enterprise and innovation centres etc) to provide a community focus for supporting business start-ups in a tangible way. There is also an urgent need for enhanced investment in public transport both radial and orbital to link housing and employment sites, as evidenced by Bexley's experience.

Q. 4 Which of the current employment sectors in Outer London will be thriving in 2031 and will any new sectors have emerged by then? Should we be actively encouraging particular sectors or focusing more on barriers that could be holding back growth in outer London?

Response: Growth is likely to occur in the retail, hotel and catering, health and education and other services. However, it would be necessary to encourage as broad an economic base as possible in outer London to ensure a sustainable local economy. There is an opportunity to re-position some areas such as Bexley which have been used for waste processing to become beacons for the 'green economy'. This would build on both the existing environmental goods and services industries and also the potential of the remaining manufacturing base to engage with this growing sector. Consequently, this sector has already been encouraged in some areas and needs to be pursued up the higher value added chain so that there is a better mix of environmental goods and services developed as a cluster.

Similarly, there is a need to re-inforce the role of towns as community hubs to develop the offer. It seems likely that the trend towards more leisure type activities in town centres might be accelerated with the growth of the night-time economy and more flexible opening hours.

Q. 5 The Commission's 'First Thoughts' paper outlines some ideas on the form 'super hubs' might take and possible locations. Do you consider the development of 4 or 5 super-hubs in Outer London would enhance the Outer London's overall employment growth potential? What form do you think they might take? What role could mixed use development have there?

Response: We do not think that promotion of a few super hubs will best serve the interest of Outer London. These are only likely to further polarise growth in outer London through the concentration of investment in already successful areas and the neglect of potential for growth and improvement in smaller centres. As explained later (response to Q.15), the lack of efficient orbital movement will also limit any benefit from a limited number of scattered super hubs.

A more polycentric approach is required where a larger number of centres are identified and interlinked through improved orbital transport connections. There should be a more devolved approach recognising the potential in all London Boroughs to contribute to London's economy. In some cases, this may be providing an alternative offer to shopping in the West End or finance jobs in the City. In other cases it may be recognising each area's particular strengths for example, in the case of Bexley, being London's workshop by having the second highest concentration of manufacturing.

Q. 6 Which super-hub locations would you consider best meet the aim to improve Outer London's economic performance and why? What can be done to ensure that the super-hubs are sufficiently attractive to business that businesses would want to base their operations there? What is required to ensure that a sufficient employment base is created for a super hub; in particular, could growth be achievable with or without infrastructure improvements (specify the infrastructure improvements needed)?

Response: As commented earlier, it is not so much the location of super hubs, but their relevance itself which to need to be re-examined. The major problem for some parts of Outer London is accessing the super hub. This would apply to both potential visitors and employees. For example, in Bexley, there is no direct and convenient public transport route to any proposed super-hub. The links tend to be more east-west into central London. Consequently, the approach needs to consider the concept of super-hubs as part of a suite of measures to encourage all parts of London to accelerate the contribution to London's economy.

Q. 7 If super-hubs are created, what role would you envisage for other town centres and other business locations/hubs (eg Park Royal) in Outer London and how can those roles be enhanced alongside the creation of super-hubs?

Response: There is a need to push forward on growing knowledge-based employment throughout Outer London. However, there is also a need to recognise the complexity and range of the offer in Outer London. In some cases, such as Belvedere, there remain large swathes of land for employment use which can link into the existing clusters of activity such as environmental industries, ICT, food production, manufacturing, etc to create a diverse offer. Similarly, the towns need to be upgraded to become a place of choice for visitors and employees throughout the day and evening. More needs to be done to engage businesses etc in being part of that offer given they have a stake in the locations.

Q. 8 What do you consider would be the optimal balance of employment opportunity for outer London between local opportunities, those in Central or Inner London, or those outside London in nearby growth corridors? What are the implications for these other areas?

Response: The opportunity for a broad range of local jobs should be maximised in order to meet sustainability objectives in terms of reducing the need to travel, making most efficient use of land, providing a broad and robust local economic base etc.

Outer London should not have to have a worse offer than those in other regions bordering London which seems to be the case. There is real opportunity which, if not seized, will mean the area drifting towards a dormitory existence bereft of activity. Currently, about 50% of economically active (including self-employed) Bexley residents live and work in the area and it seems this could be improved upon through making use of the land supply and encouraging investment. Optimal balance would be about 60% working locally, 30% in central London and 10% elsewhere. This seems achievable. Where opportunities outside the area exist they should be highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport.

(B) Quality of Life

Q. 9 In absolute and relative terms (compared with Central and Inner London and the South East) how has the residential environment changed (good or bad) in Outer London over the last 25 years and how has this affected its attractiveness as a place to live, work and do business.

Response: The quality of the residential environment has been maintained to a large extent but is coming under increasing pressure from worsening traffic congestion, an aging housing stock, a decline in local service centres, the intensification of development, decreasing revenue for the proper maintenance of roads and public spaces and problems of nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

Bexley remains a popular place to live with 63.5% of Bexley residents very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood (2004), although this masks wide variations e.g. Christchurch Ward 73%, Erith 41%.

Q. 10 What improvements would bring about the greatest improvements to the quality of life for outer London residents, workers and businesses? How would these bear on the economic objectives of the Commission?

Response: The key requirement is to build and sustain a competitive place and profile in the market with an attractive offer. This would include:

- Improved transport infrastructure, providing a real alternative to the private car particularly for intermediate journeys and orbital movements,
- a range of employment opportunities in pleasant and accessible locations, viable, vital and accessible town centres which provide a good range of essential local services and a high quality shopping environment together with a well regulated and inclusive night-time economy,
- high quality open spaces which are attractive, well maintained, safe, durable, accessible and inclusive.

Q.11 How could super hubs affect the quality of life in Outer London for residents, workers and businesses?

Response: As already pointed out earlier, these are only likely to further polarise growth in outer London through the concentration of investment in already successful areas and the ignoring of potential for growth and improvement in smaller centres. The lack of efficient orbital movement will also limit any benefit from scattered super hubs.

Q.12 How important is the provision of **local** social infrastructure to the quality of living in Outer London? (schools, health or other specific infrastructure). How does this bear on the economic objectives of the Commission?

Response: Adequate social infrastructure provision is essential to the creation of sustainable communities. Recent consultation on growth proposals within Bexley indicated strong support for resisting additional development in the absence of supporting infrastructure. Employment within education and health is also a key component of jobs growth projections within outer London through the plan period.

Q.13 What are the factors that give your or other districts in Outer London a sense of place and community ownership? How will these bear on the economic objectives of the Commission?

Response: It is important that Outer London has an identity that provides its own unique offer and sense of place.

- Bexley is perceived as a relatively green and open borough and there is good per capita open space provision. Satisfaction levels with parks and gardens are also among the highest in London and these spaces are considered to be a key component of the areas identity.
- Town and neighbourhood centres remain a strong element of local identity and retain a key role at the heart of local communities allied to their role in providing shopping and other services and as the focus for civic and community activity.
- Bexley's historic buildings and conservation areas are often symbols of past endeavour, progress and continuity.
- These elements play a key role in the local economy, town centres provide a fifth of all locally based employment whilst open spaces and heritage facilities generate leisure and tourism revenue.

Q.14 What improvements would you like to see in the quality of the public realm eg open space quality and provision? How will these bear on the economic objectives of the Commission?

Response: The public realm should be safe, attractive, accessible, durable, inclusive and well maintained. Within town centres it should also be lively and support the viability and vitality of the centre. Much of the suburban public realm is cluttered, dated, car dominated and has lost much of its green nature. Pressures on maintenance budgets have also led to the proliferation of tarmac surfaces which undermine the character of areas and often deteriorate visually through patched repair. There should be an emphasis on de-clutter, quality materials, traffic calming and pedestrian and cycle priority wherever possible.

In Bexley, it is also important to protect and maintain the open spaces, as many habitats become lost to development or degraded.

(C) Transport

Q. 15 How would you make the super-hubs you have indicated more generally accessible to residents and workers from across London and outside? What is an acceptable balance between public transport and provision for cars? Will this vary in different parts of Outer London eg in the Thames Gateway relative to West London?

Response: Bexley has not indicated any super hub. However, it is very concerned that the super hubs listed by the Commission lack the level of accessibility that is required to best serve the interest of the borough's residents and workers. The designated super hub of Croydon in south east London is not easily accessible to this borough. As the whole of Bexley is outside London Underground network, the West End also remains beyond a satisfactory level of accessibility.

In Outer London, the car remains a dominant means of travel, making it relatively difficult to reduce the growth in traffic unless a high-quality and affordable public transport option is provided. An acceptable balance can therefore be achieved by recognising, on the one hand, the valid role of the car in particular circumstances, and the need to provide public transport as an attractive alternative. At present the level of public transport accessibility varies in different parts of Outer London. Some parts of the Thames Gateway region, such as Bexley, are relatively worse served by high-quality public transport, compared to West London. This situation inevitably influences the degree of dependence on the private car.

Q. 16 What approach should be taken to traffic management including car parking, congestion and pollution and the bearing these have on climate change? How could this bear specifically on super-hubs, and more generally across Outer London if employment growth rose above historic trends and travel patterns changed as Outer London became a more attractive place to work?

Response: The key objective of traffic management is to optimise the use of available transport infrastructure efficiently and safely. Traffic calming schemes and parking control form parts of traffic management measures. Combined with travel demand management, these promote sustainability and have a positive influence on climate change. There is no specific co-relation between super hubs and traffic management. However, as super hubs have substantial trip generation implications, there will be greater role for traffic management to achieve road traffic reduction and address issues concerning road safety, congestion, parking and pollution. Bexley's policies for parking restraint in its town centres also need to be seen in the context of more liberal parking standards in the adjacent Kent districts. If employment growth rises significantly in Outer London, there will be added demand for travel. As a result, it will be necessary to provide enhanced and improved level of accessibility to opportunities, particularly by public transport. In Bexley's potential areas of growth, it is important to ensure that transport infrastructure and services are in place to link new communities and existing ones, and all must be linked to attractive employment, educational and cultural opportunities.

Q.17 Where traffic demand exceeds capacity in Outer London, what tools would be most effective for smoothing traffic around town centres (and managing crowding) in addition to or where there is not scope for infrastructure improvements?

Response: In view of the existing inadequacies facing parts of Outer London, the first priority would be to meet the demand by linking Outer London town centres by high-quality public transport connections. However, it is recognised that measures for effective travel demand must also be put in place, in addition to infrastructure

improvements. This would include provision of safe walking and cycling facilities, public realm improvement and travel awareness campaigns to influence behavioural change. Whilst Bexley is already promoting smarter travel initiatives, these have to be matched by the provision of necessary infrastructure.

Q.18 Extensive radial public transport networks already exist to town centres and some super-hubs, what needs to change to make them the modes of choice?

Response: It is not clear which radial networks are meant here: radial to the hubs or radial to central London? In any case, most of these radial networks are often bus dominated and badly affected by congestion on the roads. They need radical improvement to render them attractive modes of choice.

More importantly, there is a glaring absence of orbital routes. Bexley's experience suggests that modal shift and reducing reliance on the car will require a considerable improvement in the availability and choice of public transport. A recent integrated transport study commissioned by Bexley confirmed the need for greatly improved north-south movement through the borough, particularly to provide access to the Crossrail services at Abbey Wood and to improve accessibility to the borough's strategic town centre at Bexleyheath. This need would justify linking the borough's three rail corridors with the London Underground network in the long term, whilst providing intermediate modes in the shorter term.

Q.19 The development of super-hubs is likely to require public transport improvements to make them more accessible. That in turn is likely to need residential densities to be optimised around and within the super-hubs to justify the necessary transport investment. Is this trade-off acceptable to secure better public transport access and employment growth and is there a particular, economically viable, balance to be struck between residential intensification, transport investment and employment growth?

Response: The key requirement for a super hub to assume the role of a growth centre that generates further growth in the surrounding major and secondary centres is the need to make it easily accessible to the latter. As indicated under Q.15 above, the Commission's shortlisted super hubs do not meet this criterion, as far as Bexley is concerned. Furthermore, the very idea of super hub's transport development is based on the assumption of high-density trip end. We, therefore, believe the Commission should adopt a polycentric approach, fostering balanced economic growth and reducing the need to travel. This would focus on the full potential of a good many Outer London town centre rather than a few 'super centres' with their associated constraints.

Q.20 Do super-hubs need to evolve into 'hub and spoke' networks serving the neighbouring areas to make the most of opportunities for local residents? How could a hub and spoke network service the more geographically extensive labour markets required to support super-hubs (and provide accessible opportunities to more workers within and outside London)? If these networks are road based systems, should options for further demand management be considered?

Response: In our view, the concept of super hub as growth centres is best served through a 'hub and spoke' approach rather than being a stand-alone hub. This is the proven way that the growth centre concept can benefit neighbouring areas. However, as pointed out earlier a key issue remains the need for adequate accessibility

between the designated super hub and the catchment areas. Neither Stratford nor Croydon meets this criterion in relation to Bexley.

The adverse impacts of a road-based system cannot be overcome only by means of demand management measures. Attractive alternatives in way of high-quality public transport facilities must also be provided.

Q.21 More generally, what are the key destinations/services which people in Outer London want access to?

Response: For the people in Outer London this is in line with the general trend. This means that usually the key destinations in terms of access are, employment and services centres (including town centres) and educational, health, leisure and recreation facilities. In view of its location, in Bexley this would also include opportunities outside of London, notably Kent.

Q.22 How important is the provision of local transport infrastructure to the quality of living in outer London? How does this bear on the economy of outer London?

Transport supports local economy and strengthens local communities. It is therefore clearly essential that local transport infrastructure serves and improves the well-being and promote social inclusion of a borough's residents in Outer London. This would include improvement of public transport links and facilities and better provision of walking and cycling. In Bexley, continuing improvements to residential areas and environmental quality depend, inter alia, on a safe, efficient, accessible, sustainable and adequate transport infrastructure.

The role of transport in economic development cannot be overemphasised. In Bexley, for example, there are major regeneration opportunities in the north of the borough within the Thames Gateway where accessibility improvements will be a key element. The Thames-side area needs to be rendered fully accessible by means of a multi-modal route corridor.